

# **Town Center Committee**

## **Reston Master Plan Special Study Task Force**

*Report to the Task Force  
on the final Committee Report*

Task Force Meeting  
October 12, 2010

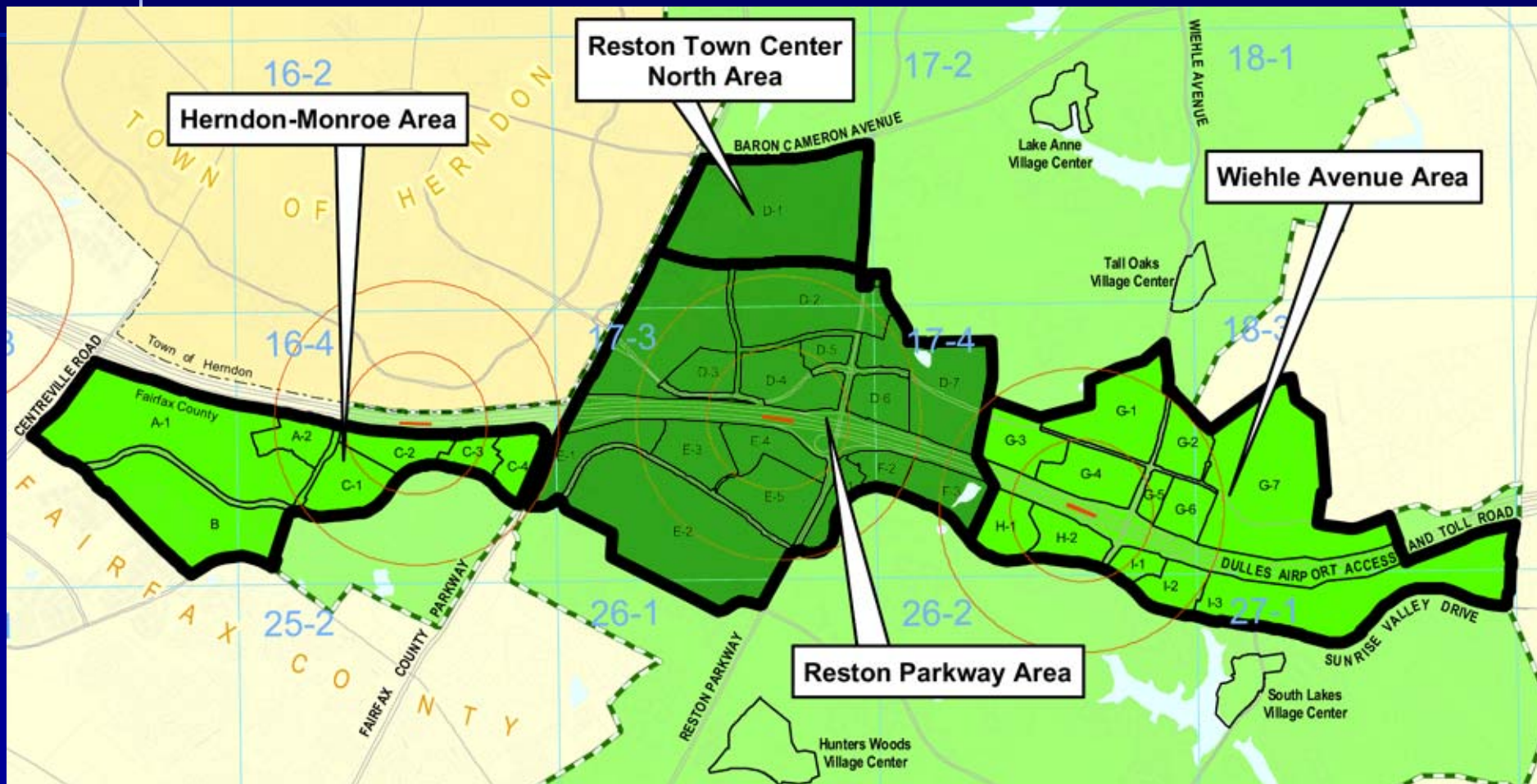
# TC Committee Members

- Pete Otteni and Robert Goudie, Co-Chairs
- Bill Keefe
- Mark Looney
- Susan Mockenhaupt
- Rae Noritake
- Terri Phillips
- Joe Stowers
- Phil Tobey
- Staff: Heidi Merkl, Sandi Smith

# Committee Methodology: Collaborative Approach

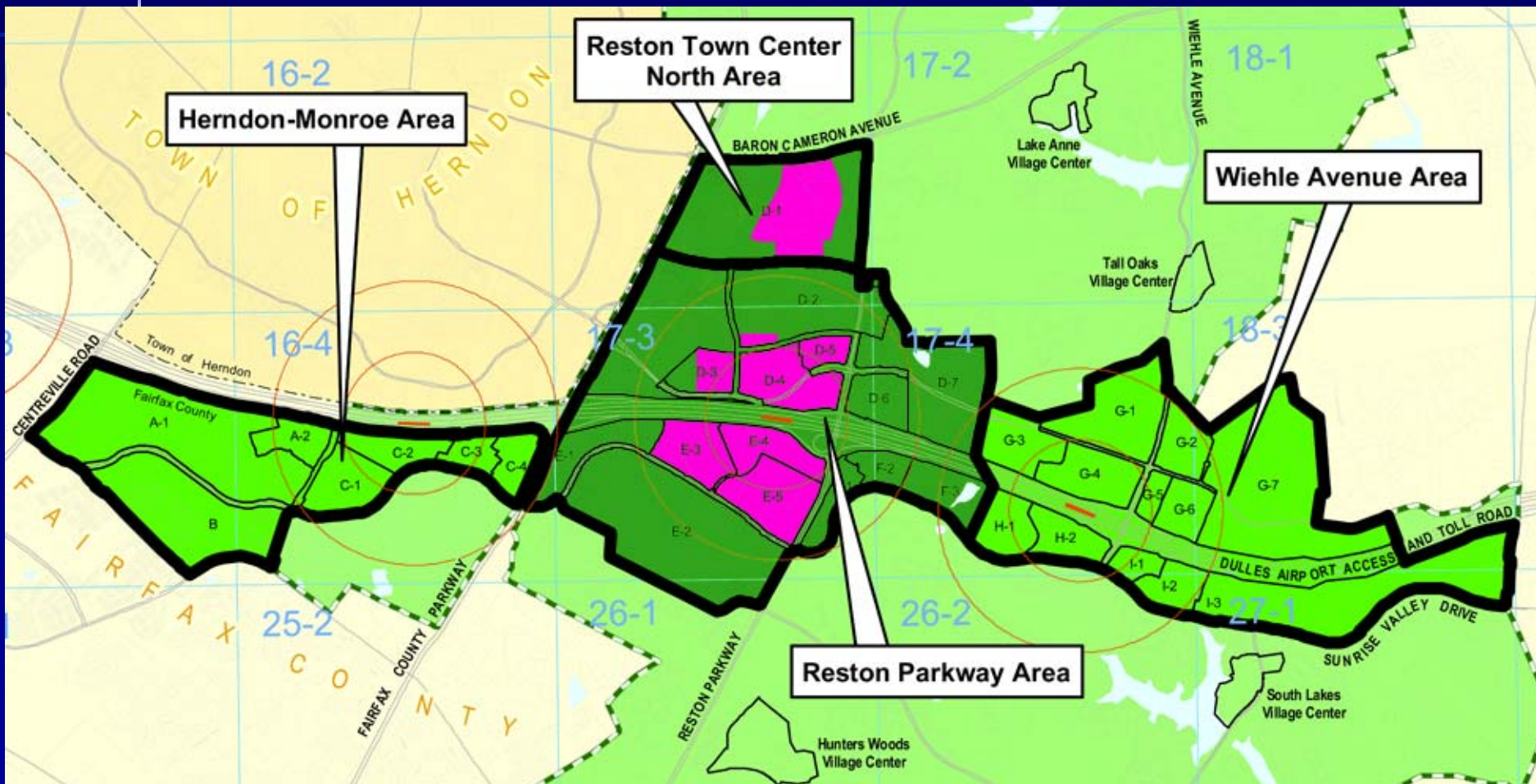
- At every meeting, public and landowners at the table
  - Open Forum every meeting
  - Wide latitude to allow commentary even during meetings
  - Landowners not on Committee actively attended and participated
- County Staff across departments
  - RMAG
  - Parks Authority
  - Interdepartmental dialogue, including police
  - Planning
- Others
  - MWAA
  - USGS

# Town Center Study Area





# Committee Focus: Much Narrower



## Areas of Focus

# Overall Vision

- Think Urban
- Reston Town Center Metro Station (new name): Balanced, mixed use creating regional destination and origination station
- Key drivers: extend the urban core south to the Metro; incent new residential; move Metro South away from suburban office park paradigm

# Area Visions

- TC Metro North (D4, D5, and Vornado lot on D3)
  - Pull the urban core south to the Metro
  - Urban plaza with signature retail, dynamic nightlife, hotel/convention capacity, significant public amenity, new office and residential
- TC Metro South (land units E3, 4, and 5)
  - Rezone from suburban office park to new mixed use space; central green as orienting feature
  - Not an extension of urban core but own identity (think new village center with heavier commercial)
- TCN (Inova and County parcels on D1)
  - More urban with central focus on government uses and new residential with supporting retail
  - Central green as orienting feature





## LEGEND

RESTON TOWN CENTER DISTRICT

CURRENT RESTON URBAN CORE

RESTON METRO NORTH

RESTON TOWN CENTER NORTH

RESTON METRO SOUTH

AREA OF PRIMARY FOCUS

MAJOR STREETS & ROADS

NEW OR IMPROVED INTERSECTION

PRIVATE STREET

TRAILS

PARKS & OPEN SPACE

PONDS

PROPOSED NEW STREETS



D-1

D-2

D-3

D-4

D-5

D-6

D-7

E-1

E-3

E-4

E-5

F-1

F-2

F-3

G-3

G-4

H-1

H-2



RESTON MASTER PLAN SPECIAL STUDY  
RESTON TOWN CENTER SUBCOMMITTEE

FOR ILLUSTRATIVE PURPOSES ONLY



NORTH  
NORITAKE  
DESIGN GROUP



# Essential Framework to Implement the Vision

- Value proposition: To achieve FARs beyond current zoning developers must provide:
  - Grid
  - Green
  - Great Design
  - 1:1 SF residential:commercial balance
- This in addition to:
  - Normal zoning process (proffers)
  - All conditional on infrastructure analysis

# The Conditions Precedent:

- Grid
- Green
- Great Design
- 1:1

# 1. Grid/Connectivity

- Intra- and inter-parcel connectivity
  - Some parcels a grid, others not
- “Complete streets”
  - Accommodate all modes of travel
    - Bike/ped separation; improved crossings; bike parking and sharing
  - Incorporate Tyson’s-like street hierarchy



## 2. Great Design

- Goldberger: make it a political priority
- Report sends clear message to design review mechanism
  - Incentives strong; demand that design and architecture warrant them
- D4 especially must speak to sense of place and destination we seek to create

### 3. Green – Open Space

- Urban Parks Standard: 1.5 acres/1K residents + 1 acre/10K employees

- Applied to TC Metro North and South:

|                            |          |                          |
|----------------------------|----------|--------------------------|
| 3.5 FAR, 1:1,<br>2 res./du | 32 acres | 22% of total land<br>bay |
| 5.0 FAR, 1:1,<br>2 res./du | 50 acres | 31% of total land<br>bay |

# Committee Proposal

- +/-20% “functional open space” (modified PRM standard)
  - Would include:
    - Central greens and urban plazas; pocket parks
    - Traffic calming
    - Pedestrian pathways through blocks
    - Land unit buffers as appropriate
    - Storm water ponds if park buffers
    - Innovative uses of building rooftops
  - Would not include:
    - Streets and typical sidewalks; parking
    - Ball fields (not in down town and urban spaces)
- Apply by parcel or zoning application
  - Allows some project flexibility



# Central Open Space

- Key feature of all three land bays
  - Shared space; high social utility
  - TC Metro North urban plaza
  - TC Metro South and TCN central greens (5-7 acres contiguous space) could be active, passive, combined: community to decide
- Relax 20% standard for parcels contributing to the central open space
  - adjust based on size/character of contribution
  - 20% a high water mark in urban setting, esp. if limiting to “functional” open space

## 4. 1:1 SF res:office: why require this?

- Need residential to mitigate (not eliminate) traffic impacts (walk to work/Metro/nightlife)
- Residential can be harder to build (often less ROI)
- See Center for Transit-Oriented Development, p. 8 (<http://www.reconnectingamerica.org/public/show/tod202>) (toughest challenge in already-built out TOD areas is getting residential built)
- So identified “healthy” residential:commercial balance as community priority together with creating a vibrant, urban downtown

# Balancing “healthy” residential with downtown

- GMU cites Ballston as model in corridor:
  - 4:1 jobs:households ~ 1:1 SF residential:office
  - See also Crystal City (new plan calls for 1:1 SF res:office)
- GMU: TC study area now 15:1 jobs:households
  - Partly organic; partly residential prohibited in RCIG
- Committee Plan: bend that curve almost fourfold



# How would it work?

- Requirement applies to “any property subject to a zoning application”
  - Allows project flexibility so long as overall application 1:1
    - Encourages joint or collaborative zoning
  - Can not ensure residential and commercial built at same time
    - But guaranties bona fide “residential land banks”
- Hotel and Retail outside ratio
  - Hotel impacts infrastructure like residential
  - Want to encourage retail for dynamic urban spaces
  - Ballston and Crystal City did same

# Additional Incentives

- Relax or waive parking regs throughout (let market control)
- In TC South, for residential built in first 7 years ("first movers"):
  - Compress timing on zoning applications;
  - Consider tax relief or incentives; and
  - Consider relaxing contributions for off-site mitigation.

# 1:1 Provides >Capacity than GMU Projections

|                                 |  |  |
|---------------------------------|--|--|
| GMU 2050<br>Projected<br>Demand | 3.5 FAR, 1:1 SF<br>for just Metro<br>North and South | 5.0 FAR, 1:1 SF<br>for just Metro<br>North and South |
| 7,800 units                     | 10,000 units   | 14,000 units   |

- Note: Must revisit PRC Ordinance and TC density caps to permit
- 2.5 FAR at 1:1 ~ GMU projection

# Minority Report: Get jobs:*workers* 1:1

- Premise: if jobs:workers in balance will even better mitigate traffic impacts of new growth
  - To achieve, would require 4:1 SF res:office to “catch up” for current TC imbalance
  - 2.5:1 SF for new growth alone to be 1:1 jobs:workers
- Committee opposes:
  - No precedent for urban, downtown paradigm
    - Talking only Town Center (and then only areas closest to the Metro)
    - What Reston should be overall a different conversation
  - Could freeze development and limit needed commercial
  - Must factor in Metro; its promise is to help mitigate
  - 1:1 SF a floor not ceiling; more residential if market allows
  - County to periodically evaluate if goals being met

# Infrastructure (traffic)

- Committee recommends:
  - Bus circulator
  - Road diet for New Dominion
  - New streets, connectors, crossings, and intersections
  - Plaza America/Westin ped crossing
  - Street hierarchy ala Tyson's report (follow up needed)
  - Engraft RMAG into Comp Plan
- No new zoning or development until:
  - TF does complete infrastructure assessment, combining TC, Wiehle, and H-M recommendations
  - Every TC zoning application must include traffic-bike-ped impact analysis and possible mitigation as needed



# Increased FAR Option

- TC Metro North and South up to 5.0; TCN up to 0.9 for non-residential uses
- **Not by right**
  - Let good projects not FAR limits drive decisions
  - Increased *option* only if conditions precedent met
  - Increase only to what project needs to succeed
- Ceiling must be high to permit vision Reston wants
  - Not starting from scratch; profitable commercial already on the ground
  - Must incent to get new residential/TOD
  - Creating regional destination with community benefits (open space; amenities) will be expensive

# FAR Perspective

- 20 years in TC not yet built out at 2.5
  - 6.0 in Ballston and still have single-story uses *across from Metro station*
  - Inherent market limitations
    - GMU: 26K new TC jobs through 2050
    - 2.5 FAR~8MSF Commercial~28K jobs\*
    - 3.5 FAR~12MSF Commercial~40K jobs\*
    - 5.0 FAR~17MSF Commercial~57K jobs\*
- \* Just TC Metro North and South

# Building Heights

- Tapered model: highest closest to Metro and tapering down
  - TC Metro North and South (1/4 mi.): 350'
  - TC Urban Core (1/2 mi.): 275'
  - TCN (>1/2mi.): 200' (from 175')
- Measure from grade, and up to but not exceeding the limit
- Must be variegated to create diverse topography

# Other Significant Items

- Areas outside Metro North/South
  - Phase II if/as necessary
- Air Rights
  - Position: embed pylons now
  - Preserve future air rights – next evolution of TC
- Governance – no new Master HOAs
  - Use RA or RTCA if to be required
  - TCN surrounded by Town Center, so RTCA there
  - Consider deeding central greens or having them privately maintained (but publicly available)

# Goldberger Takeaways

- Critical to focus on TC Metro Station; unique potential
- Pull urban core south to Metro
- Get urban – won't achieve what you want without much higher, urban densities





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